

**AMENDMENTS**

**In the Claims**

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) The extruder screw ~~[[nose]]~~ and flow channel head assembly according to claim 9 further characterized by said upstream portion of said extruder screw nose of increasing diameter ~~having~~ has a conical surface disposed at an angle of 45 degrees to 65 degrees relative to the axis of said screw nose.

4. (Currently Amended) The extruder screw ~~[[nose]]~~ and flow channel head assembly of claim 3 further characterized by said angle of said conical surface of said upstream portion being about 50 degrees.

5. (Currently Amended) The extruder screw ~~[[nose]]~~ and flow channel head assembly according to claim ~~[[2]]~~ 10 further characterized by said generally conical surface of said downstream portion being at an angle of 35 degrees to 45 degrees relative to the axis of said screw nose.

6. (Currently Amended) The extruder screw ~~[[nose]]~~ and flow channel head assembly of claim 5 further characterized by said angle of said generally conical surface of said downstream portion being at an angle of about 40 degrees.

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently Amended) An extruder screw and flow channel head assembly comprising an extruder having a cylindrical barrel with a feed end and a discharge end, said

discharge end being attached to a flow channel head containing a flow channel for carrying rubber from said extruder to a suitable die, a screw nose on said extruder screw positioned in a transition space at said discharge end of said barrel ~~characterized by~~ wherein said screw nose ~~having~~ has a radially expanding upstream portion providing a conical surface of increasing diameter in the direction of flow of said rubber for maintaining said rubber in working engagement with said screw nose and ~~[[said]]~~ the cylinder wall of said cylindrical barrel, whereby the pressure on said rubber is maintained in said transition space, said cylindrical barrel having a constant diameter, wherein said screw remains stationary as it moves said rubber from said feed and to said discharge end.

10. (Currently Amended) An extruder screw and flow channel head assembly according to claim 9, further characterized by said screw nose having a downstream portion with a conical surface of decreasing diameter in the direction of flow of said rubber spaced from an opposing tapered wall of said flow channel head to maintain working engagement of said rubber with said conical surface of said screw nose and said tapered wall of said flow channel head whereby pressure on said rubber is maintained to prevent expansion of volatiles in said rubber.

11. (Currently Amended) An extruder screw and flow channel head assembly according to claim 10, further characterized by said flow channel having a generally constant cross sectional area from said tapered wall of said flow channel head to a discharge end of said flow channel head to maintain pressure on said rubber and provide time for volatiles in said material to be dissolved before ejection from said flow channel head.

12. (Cancelled)